How Teaching Can Help You Survive Graduate School

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Overview

• How Can Teaching Help You?
• Common Questions
• How to Survive Your First TAship
• Balancing Research & Teaching
• Support for Teaching at NU
How Can Teaching Help You?

• Experience for your CV
• Interact with motivated undergraduates
• Sense of accomplishment
• Practice & develop your skills
  – Critical thinking, facilitation, explanation, planning
• Explore & expand interests
  – Explore ideas for your research
• It’s fun! And intellectually rewarding
Common Questions

• How are TAships assigned?
• What are typical TA duties?
• How to respond to questions about grades?
• Opportunities to guest lecture?
• Other questions?
How To Survive Your First TAship

• Attend the New TA Conference
• Participate in Troubleshooting Your Teaching
• Get observed by a Graduate Teaching Fellow
• Take advantage of your students’ knowledge
• Seek multiple forms of feedback
• Look for multiple role models
• Use the Center’s online resources
• Have fun!
Balancing Teaching & Research

• Discuss expectations up front (yours & theirs)
• Monitor the hours you spend TAing (15 hrs/wk)
• TA classes related to research, if possible
  – Better to have a broader range of classes
• Seek opportunities to guest lecture
• Designate time for training/teaching
How Can the Searle Center Support Your Teaching?

• Help graduate students, postdocs & faculty
  • Promote active learning
  • Research-based
  • Cross-disciplinary conversations
What support do you need?

• As a New TA:
  – Address concerns & learn the basics of teaching

• As an Advanced Graduate Student:
  – Develop your teaching skills

• As a Junior Colleague:
  – Prepare to become a professor
Searle Center Programs for Graduate Students

- New TA Conference
- Troubleshooting Your Teaching
- Individual Observation and Consultation
- Graduate Workshop Series
- Teaching, Learning, and Technology
- TA Fellows
- Graduate Teaching Certificate Program
- Graduate Teaching Fellowship
Searle Center for Teaching Excellence

• Contact the Center
  – Phone: 847-467-2338
  – Email: teach@northwestern.edu
  – Web: http://www.northwestern.edu/searle
  – Twitter: @searleteaching

• Visit the Center
  – 1 block N of Noyes, ½ block W of Sheridan
  – Across from International Office